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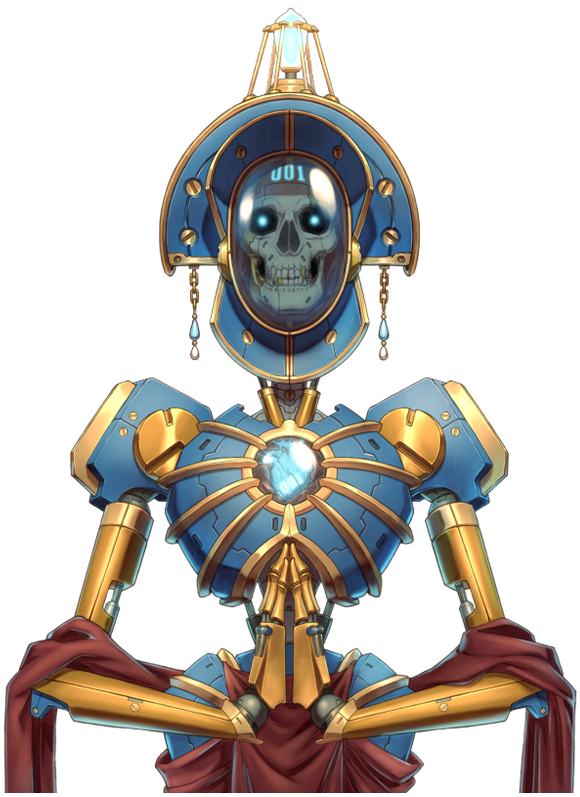
The Necromaton

A Pointy Hat Artificer Lich



"When we think of immortality, many of us think not of flesh, but of steel. Cold, hard, unfeeling metal will outlast all biological matter. To those not concerned with questions about what is natural, there is much appeal in the eternal artificial.

A Necromaton is an anomaly even among liches, as they are completely and utterly defined by their phylactery. An artificer who turns to lichdom has an arduous task ahead of them: they must make a construct that will house their soul. The process to create these is complex, lengthy, and costly. As a general rule, artificers never settle for anything basic, and knowing that the construct will house their soul can often drive an artificer to add more and more features and capabilities to that automaton, but the requirements for a construct to act as a phylactery for the lich artificer are deceptively simple.

The first one is that the artificer must make the construct themselves. It's unknown exactly how much of the process can be left to automation, but the artificer must have a hand in the constructs make.
The second one is darker. For a construct to act as a phylactery, it needs a biological component. This is called a soul anchor, *and it's often one of the artificer's own organs, although bones have been known to work. As much as some artificers wish to rid themselves of the weakness of their flesh, they cannot deny that for their souls to be grafted onto their automaton phylacteries, there needs to be a biological component for the soul to attach itself to.*

Once the creation of one of these automatons is completed successfully, it is referred to as a necromaton -- and so is the artificer lich, as they are one and the same. Once the artificer embraces death to turn to lichdom, their soul possesses the constructed phylactery, gaining access to all its features and capabilities. A necromaton's phylactery is their own mechanical body.

Necromatons understand that replacing their flesh body with one of steel is not enough. It might be harder to destroy a necromaton housing the artificer's soul, but it isn't impossible. A necromaton will then create new iterations of itself, more bodies to house their soul in case the one they currently occupy is destroyed, or in case they need different capabilities. A necromaton can do anything they want to do, as long as the artificer can create a body able to do those things. The soul becomes the software that runs through the hardware of the constructed body. Like a spirit possessing a person, the necromaton possesses their own phylacteries at will.

Necromatons are known to create entire armies of automaton phylacteries. These constructs are able to move and act on their own, but they can also be possessed by the necromaton's soul at any time. These necromantic armies of constructs act as a powerful, unrelenting force against the necromaton's enemies, but they also act as insurance, since any of the constructs can house the necromaton's soul if the one they currently inhabit is destroyed.

But, like for any lich, eternal undeath is an ongoing struggle for the necromaton. The soul anchors inside the necromaton's bodies decay with time, as do the shells themselves. Even steel decays, metals lose their shine, and even if iron is harder than flesh, it can still rust. Necromatons find themselves needing to create and replace their phylacteries regularly, and there's only so much their old flesh bodies can offer them for soul anchors. Either because of the sheer number of phylacteries a necromaton builds, or because they must replace their bodies with new ones as time goes by, the necromaton must eventually turn to a different source of soul anchors. A living source, a new raw material to use in their construction of new necromatons: and so, the necromaton bends metal and meat, bones and bolts, to create new bodies out of the pieces of their victims in a race to stave off death itself."

NECROMATON (base model)

Medium Undead, Any Alignment

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)
Hit Points 153 (18d8 + 72)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	18 (+4)	19 (+4)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +10, Int +11
Skills Arcana +11, Investigation +11, Medicine +8, Sleight of Hand +10
Damage Resistances Cold
Damage Immunities Necrotic, Poison; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks
Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Poisoned
Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages The languages it knew in life
Challenge 20 (25,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +6

Necromaton Phylactery. A necromaton's body is its own phylactery. Its soul is anchored to the necromaton by biological matter (often an organ). If the phylactery the soul is currently inhabiting is destroyed and there are no other necromatons for the soul to possess, the necromaton dies.

Magic Resistance. The necromaton has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Turn Resistance. The necromaton has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Inventory. The necromaton is aware of the exact location of all of its necromaton phylacteries at all times.

Soul Transference. If the phylactery the necromaton's soul is currently inhabiting is destroyed, the soul can possess another necromaton phylactery.

- If the target phylactery is within 500 feet of the soul, the soul instantaneously possesses that necromaton phylactery.
- If the target phylactery is within 10 miles of the soul, the soul takes 1 hour to possess that necromaton phylactery.
- If the target phylactery is within 60 miles of the soul, the soul takes 1 day to possess that necromaton phylactery.
- If the target phylactery is more than 100 miles away from the soul, the soul takes 1 week to possess that necromaton phylactery.
- If the target phylactery is in another plane of existence than the one the soul is currently occupying, the soul takes 1 week to travel to the plane of existence where that necromaton phylactery is located. If the soul has to then travel within that plane of existence to reach the desired necromaton phylactery, the rules above still apply.

Spellcasting. The necromaton casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as its spellcasting ability (spell save DC 19, +11 to hit with spell attacks):

- At will: *mage hand, mending, alarm, catapult, magic missile (cast at 4th level), thunderwave (cast at 3rd level)*
- 3/day each: *counterspell, heat metal, hold person, magic weapon, scorching ray, shatter*
- 2/day each: *fireball (cast at 5th level), haste, protection from energy, resilient sphere*
- 1/day each: *animate objects (cast at 7th level), arcane hand (cast at 7th level), wall of force, seeming*

Actions

Arm Cannon. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 17 (4d6 + 3) lightning damage.

Arm Torch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 17 (4d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Legendary Actions

The necromaton can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The necromaton regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Missile. The necromaton casts *magic missile* at 4th level.

Spell. The necromaton casts a non-damaging spell.

Arm Attack. The necromaton makes one Arm Cannon attack or one Arm Torch attack.

Propulsed Backstep. The necromaton uses its thrusters to immediately move up to its speed without incurring attacks of opportunity.

Lair Actions

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the necromaton can take a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the necromaton can't use the same effect two rounds in a row.

- The necromaton extends its necromantic magic to all constructs made by it within 90 feet of itself. Those constructs add 1d8 necrotic damage to any of their attacks until initiative count 20 on the next round.
- The necromaton sends a shocking volt of arcane energy to one construct of its choice within 60 feet of the necromaton. The chosen construct doubles its movement speed and can take two actions and two reactions until initiative count 20 on the next round.
- The necromaton grants its arcane gifts to all constructs made by it within 30 feet of itself. Those constructs can use their action to cast *mending* on any construct to heal 2d6 hit points. They retain this ability until initiative count 20 on the next round.

NECROMATON (flying model)

Small Undead, Any Alignment

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 135 (18d6 + 72)
Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	20 (+5)	19 (+4)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +10, Int +11
Skills Acrobatics +11, Arcana +11, Investigation +11, Medicine +10, Perception +10, Sleight of Hand +11, Stealth +11
Damage Resistances Cold
Damage Immunities Necrotic, Poison; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks
Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Poisoned
Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 20
Languages The languages it knew in life
Challenge 20 (25,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +6

Necromaton Phylactery. A necromaton's body is its own phylactery. Its soul is anchored to the necromaton by biological matter (often an organ). If the phylactery the soul is currently inhabiting is destroyed and there are no other necromatons for the soul to possess, the necromaton dies.

Magic Resistance. The necromaton has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Turn Resistance. The necromaton has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Flyby. The necromaton doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Sniper. The necromaton doubles the range of all its spell attacks and ignores half or three quarter cover for all its ranged weapon attacks.

Inventory. The necromaton is aware of the exact location of all of its necromaton phylacteries at all times.

Soul Transference. If the phylactery the necromaton's soul is currently inhabiting is destroyed, the soul can possess another necromaton phylactery.

- If the target phylactery is within 500 feet of the soul, the soul instantaneously possesses that necromaton phylactery.
- If the target phylactery is within 10 miles of the soul, the soul takes 1 hour to possess that necromaton phylactery.
- If the target phylactery is within 60 miles of the soul, the soul takes 1 day to possess that necromaton phylactery.
- If the target phylactery is more than 100 miles away from the soul, the soul takes 1 week to possess that necromaton phylactery.
- If the target phylactery is in another plane of existence than the one the soul is currently occupying, the soul takes 1 week to travel to the plane of existence where that necromaton phylactery is located. If the soul has to then travel within that plane of existence to reach the desired necromaton phylactery, the rules above still apply.

Spellcasting. The necromaton casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as its spellcasting ability (spell save DC 19, +11 to hit with spell attacks):

- At will: *mage hand, mending, alarm, catapult, magic missile (cast at 4th level), thunderwave (cast at 3rd level)*
- 3/day each: *counterspell, heat metal, hold person, magic weapon, scorching ray, shatter*
- 2/day each: *fireball (cast at 5th level), haste, protection from energy, resilient sphere*
- 1/day each: *animate objects (cast at 7th level), arcane hand (cast at 7th level), wall of force, seeming*

Actions

Arm Cannon. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 19 (4d6 + 5) lightning damage.

Net Cannon. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d6 + 5). On a hit, the creature is restrained by a steel net. The creature can make a Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Strength (Athletics) check DC 17 to attempt to free itself from the net as an action on all subsequent turns.

Legendary Actions

The necromaton can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The necromaton regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Missile. The necromaton casts *magic missile* at 4th level.

Spell. The necromaton casts a non-damaging spell.

Arm Attack. The necromaton makes one Arm Cannon attack or one Net Cannon attack.

Propulsed Backstep. The necromaton uses its thrusters to immediately move up to its speed without incurring attacks of opportunity.

Lair Actions

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the necromaton can take a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the necromaton can't use the same effect two rounds in a row.

- The necromaton extends its necromantic magic to any constructs made by it within 90 feet of itself. Those constructs add 1d8 necrotic damage to any of their attacks until initiative count 20 on the next round.
- The necromaton sends a shocking volt of arcane energy to one construct of its choice within 60 feet of the necromaton. The chosen construct doubles its movement speed and can take two actions and two reactions until initiative count 20 on the next round.
- The necromaton grants its arcane gifts to all constructs made by it within 30 feet of itself. Those constructs can use their action to cast *mending* on any construct to heal 2d6 hit points. They retain this ability until initiative count 20 on the next round.

NECROMATON (bulldozer model)

Large Undead, Any Alignment

Armor Class 21 (natural armor)
Hit Points 171 (18d10 + 72)
Speed 50 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	11 (+0)	19 (+4)	20 (+5)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +10, Int +11
Skills Arcana +11, Athletics +11, Intimidation +7, Investigation +11, Medicine +7
Damage Resistances Cold
Damage Immunities Necrotic, Poison; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks
Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Poisoned
Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 20
Languages The languages it knew in life
Challenge 21 (33,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +6

Necromaton Phylactery. A necromaton's body is its own phylactery. Its soul is anchored to the necromaton by biological matter (often an organ). If the phylactery the soul is currently inhabiting is destroyed and there are no other necromatons for the soul to possess, the necromaton dies.

Magic Resistance. The necromaton has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Turn Resistance. The necromaton has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Charge. If the necromaton moves at least 10 feet straight towards a target and then hits it with a ram attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 9 (2d8) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 19 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 10 feet away and knocked prone.

Inventory. The necromaton is aware of the exact location of all of its necromaton phylacteries at all times.

Soul Transference. If the phylactery the necromaton's soul is currently inhabiting is destroyed, the soul can possess another necromaton phylactery.

- If the target phylactery is within 500 feet of the soul, the soul instantaneously possesses that necromaton phylactery.
- If the target phylactery is within 10 miles of the soul, the soul takes 1 hour to possess that necromaton phylactery.
- If the target phylactery is within 60 miles of the soul, the soul takes 1 day to possess that necromaton phylactery.
- If the target phylactery is more than 100 miles away from the soul, the soul takes 1 week to possess that necromaton phylactery.
- If the target phylactery is in another plane of existence than the one the soul is currently occupying, the soul takes 1 week to travel to the plane of existence where that necromaton phylactery is located. If the soul has to then travel within that plane of existence to reach the desired necromaton phylactery, the rules above still apply.

Spellcasting. The necromaton casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as its spellcasting ability (spell save DC 19, +11 to hit with spell attacks):

- At will: *mage hand, mending, alarm, catapult, magic missile (cast at 4th level), thunderwave (cast at 3rd level)*
- 3/day each: *counterspell, heat metal, hold person, magic weapon, scorching ray, shatter*
- 2/day each: *fireball (cast at 5th level), haste, protection from energy, resilient sphere*
- 1/day each: *animate objects (cast at 7th level), arcane hand (cast at 7th level), wall of force, seeming*

Actions

Ram. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 23 (4d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage..

Arm Torch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 19 (4d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Legendary Actions

The necromaton can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The necromaton regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Missile. The necromaton casts *magic missile* at 4th level.

Spell. The necromaton casts a non-damaging spell.

Arm Attack. The necromaton makes an arm cannon attack.

Ram. The necromaton moves up to its speed without provoking attacks of opportunity and makes one ram attack.

Burrow. The necromaton immediately burrows underground up to 60 feet.

Lair Actions

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the necromaton can take a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the necromaton can't use the same effect two rounds in a row.

- The necromaton extends its necromantic magic to any constructs made by it within 90 feet of itself. Those constructs add 1d8 necrotic damage to any of their attacks until initiative count 20 on the next round.
- The necromaton sends a shocking volt of arcane energy to one construct of its choice within 60 feet of the necromaton. The chosen construct doubles its movement speed and can take two actions and two reactions until initiative count 20 on the next round.
- The necromaton grants its arcane gifts to all constructs made by it within 30 feet of itself. Those constructs can use their action to cast *mending* on any construct to heal 2d6 hit points. They retain this ability until initiative count 20 on the next round.

Tips on Running The Necromaton:

- The necromaton is meant to fight alongside other constructs that can serve as emergency necromaton phylacteries.
- An easy way to get stat blocks for any construct under the necromaton's control is to take a necromaton stat block and strip away the spellcasting, legendary action, and lair action sections of its stat block. You may also decide to lower their HP -- or increase it -- depending on the type of challenge you'd like to offer to your players.
- The necromaton has a surprising amount of actions for a lich; it's less beholden to its spell list when it comes to inflicting damage, which is why most of its spells are focused on crowd control, buffs, and debuffs.
- All of the necromaton's lair actions focus on the constructs that are also on the field with it, to further emphasize how important it is for the necromaton to fight alongside its constructs.
- The base model necromaton was designed as the baseline, whereas the other two fill other combat roles.
- The flying model necromaton is a ranged attacker with great perception that can serve as a scout and a sniper thanks to its higher dexterity and wisdom, additional skills, and ability to fly. To counterbalance this, its size, HP, and AC are smaller.
- The bulldozer model necromaton is a tank, with higher AC, HP, and strength. It has access to the same spells as the other models, but its attacks hit harder, especially thanks to its charge ability, and it can burrow to escape enemy attacks and surprise them by attacking from below.

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